

FAIR AS THE MOON

Clear as the Sun and Terrible
as an Army

WITH BANNERS IN THE CHURCH

Of Christ—Talmage Tells of His Wonderful
March in His Eloquent Sermon
for the Week.

LOUISVILL, Aug. 14.—Rev. Dr. Talmage's European preaching tour is drawing to a close. During the week he has preached three or four times in different cities, following out the programme already announced, and everywhere meeting large and enthusiastic audiences. This week he speaks at Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield and Derby. The subject chosen for today is "Useful Suffering," the text taken being Luke xiv, 26, "It behooved Christ to suffer."

There have been scholars who have ventured the assertion that the pains of our Lord were unnecessary. Indeed it was a shocking waste of tears and blood and agony, unless some great end were to be reached. If men can prove that no good result comes of it, then the character of God is impeached, and the universe must stand abhorrent and denunciatory at the fact that the Father allowed the butchery of his only begotten Son.

We all admire the brave six hundred men described by Tennyson as dashing into the conflict when they knew they must die, and knew at the same time that "some one had blundered"; but we are abhorrent of the man who made the blunder and who caused the sacrifice of those brave men for no use. But I shall show you, if the Lord will help me, this morning that for good reasons Christ went through the torture. In other words, "It behooved Christ to suffer."

In the first place, I remark that Christ's lacerations were necessary, because man's rescue was an impossibility except by the payment of some great sacrifice. Outraged law had thundered against iniquity. Man must die unless a substitute can intercept that death. Let Gabriel step forth. He refuses. Let Michael the archangel step forth. He refuses. No Roman citizen, no Athenian, no Corinthian, no reformer, no angel volunteered. Christ then bared his heart to the pang. He paid for our redemption in tears and blood and wounded feet and scourged shoulders and torn brow. "It is done." Heaven and earth heard the snap of the prison bar. Stuns ceased to quake with wrath the moment that Calvary began to rock in crucifixion. Christ had suffered.

"Oh," says some man, "I don't like that doctrine of substitution; let every man bear his own burdens, and weep his own tears, and fight his own battles." Why, my brother, there is vicarious suffering all over the world. Did not your parents suffer for you? Do you not sometimes suffer for your children? Does not the patriot suffer for his country? Did not Grace Darling suffer for the drowning sailors? Vicarious suffering on all sides! But how insignificant compared with this scene of vicarious suffering!

Was it for crimes that I had done
He groined upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree.

Christ must suffer to pay the price of our redemption.

THE HEALING SYMPATHY.

But I remark again, the sufferings of Christ were necessary in order that the world's sympathies might be aroused. Men are won to the right and good through their sympathies. The world must feel a right before it can act aright. So the cross was allowed to be lifted that the world's sympathies might be aroused. Men who have been obliterated by the cruelties they have enacted, by the massacres they have inflicted, by the horrors of which they have been guilty, have become little children in the presence of this dying Saviour.

What the swords could not do, what juggernauts could not subdue, the wounded hand of Christ has accomplished. There are this moment millions of people held under the spell of that one sacrifice. The hammers that struck the spikes into the cross have broken the rocky heart of the world. Nothing but the agonies of a Saviour's death throes could rouse the world's sympathies.

I remark again, "It behooved Christ to suffer," that the strength and persistence of the divine love might be demonstrated. Was it the applause of the world that induced Christ on that crusade from heaven? Why, all the universe was at his feet. Could the conquest of this insignificant planet have paid him for his career of pain if it had been a mere matter of applause? All the honors of heaven surging at his feet. Would your queen give up her throne that she might rule a miserable tribe in Africa? Would the Lord Jesus Christ on the throne of the universe come down to our planet if it were a mere matter of applause and acclamation?

Nor was it an expedition undertaken for the accumulation of vast wealth. What could all the harvests and the diamonds of our little world do for him whose are the glories of infinitude and eternity? Nor was it an experiment—an attempt to show what he could do with the hard hearted race. He who wheels the stars in their courses and holds the pillars of the universe on the tips of his fingers needed to make no experiment to find what he could do. Oh, I will tell you, my friends, what it was. It was undesignated, unlimited, all conquering, all consuming, infinite, eternal, omnipotent love that opened the gates, that started the star in the east, with finger of light pointing down to the manger, that adorned the Christmas chair above Bethlehem, that opened the stable door where Christ was born, that lifted him on the cross. Love thirsty at the well. Love as the sick man's couch. Love as the cripple's crutch. Love sweating in the garden. Love dying on the cross. Love wrapped in the grave. You cannot mistake it. The blindest eye must see it. The hardest heart must feel it. The deafest ear must hear it. Parable and miracle, wondrous talk and seaside interview, all the scenes of his life, all the sufferings of his death, proving beyond controversy that for our ingrate earth God has yearned with stupendous and inextinguishable love.

THE EXERCISING SIMPLICITY OF SIN.

But I remark again, "It behooved Christ to suffer," that the nature of human guilt might be demonstrated. There is not a common sense man in the house today that will not admit that the machinery of society is out of gear, that the human mind and the human heart are disorganized, that something ought to be done and done right away for its repair and readjustment. But the height and depth and length and breadth and hate and recklessness and infernal enmity of the human heart for sin would not have been demonstrated if against the holy and innocent one of the cross it had not been hurled in one bolt of fire.

Christ was not the first man that had been put to death. There had been many before him put to death, but they had their virtues, their follies, their sins, their inconsistencies. But when the mob outside of Jerusalem howled at the Son of God it was hate against goodness, it was blasphemy against virtue, it was earth against heaven. What was it in that innocent and loving face of Christ that excited the vituperation and the contumely and scorn of men? If he had bantered them to come on, if he had laughed them into derision, if he had denounced them as the vagabonds that they were, we could understand their ferocity, but it was against inoffensiveness that they brandished their spears, and shook their fists, and ground their teeth, and howled and scoffed and jeered and mocked.

What evil had he done? Whose eyesight had he put out? None; but he had given vision to the blind. Whose child had he slain? None; but he had restored the dead damsel to her mother. What law had he broken? None; but he had inculcated obedience to government. What foul plot had he enacted against the happiness of the race? None; he had come to save a world. The only cruelty he ever enacted was to heal the sick. The only ostentation he ever displayed was to sit with publicans and sinners and wash the disciples' feet.

The only selfishness he ever exhibited was to give his life for his enemies. And yet all the wrath of the world surged against his holy heart. Hear the red-hot scorn of the world hissing in the pools of a Saviour's blood! And standing there today let us see what an unreasonable, loathsome, hateful, blasting, damning thing is the iniquity of the human heart. Unlashed, what will it not do? It will scale any height, it will fathom the very depth of hell, it will revel in all lasciviousness. There is no blasphemy it will not utter, there are no cruelties on which it will not gorge itself. It will wallow in filth, it will breathe the air of charnelhouses of corruption and call them aroma, it will quaff the blood of immortal souls and call it nectar.

When sin murdered Christ on the cross it showed what it would do with the Lord God Almighty if it could get at him. The prophet had declared—I think it was Jeremiah—had declared centuries before the truth, but not until sin shot out its forked tongue at the crucifix and tossed its sting into the soul of a martyr, Jesus was it illustrated, that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

OUR LOVE TOWARD CHRIST.
Again, "It behooved Christ to suffer," that our affections might be excited Christward. Why, sir, the behavior of our Lord has stirred the affections of all those who have ever heard of it. It has hung the art galleries of the world with such pictures as Ghirlandajo's "Worship of the Magi," Giotto's "Baptism of Christ," Holman Hunt's "Christ in the Temple," Tintoret's "Agony in the Garden," Angelo's "Crucifixion," and it has called out Handel's "Messiah," and rung sweetest chimes in "Young's" "Night Thoughts," and filled the psalmody of the world with the penitential notes of sorrow and the hosannas of Christian triumph.

Show me any other king who has so many subjects. What is the most potent name today in the United States, in France, in England, in Scotland, in Ireland? Jesus. Other kings have had many subjects, but where is the king who has so many admiring subjects as Christ? Show me a regiment of a thousand men in their army and I will show you a battalion of ten thousand men in Christ's army.

Show me in history where one man has given his property and his life for any one else, and I will show you in history hundreds and thousands of men who have cheerfully died that Christ might reign. Aye, there are a hundred men in this house who, if need were, would step out and die for Jesus. Their faith may now seem to be faint, and sometimes they may be inconsistent, but let the fires of martyrdom be kindled, throw them into the pit, cover them with poisonous serpents, pound them, flail them, crush them, and I will tell you what their last cry would be. "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

Oh, yes! the Lord Jesus has won the affections of many of us. There are some of us who can say this morning, "Lord Jesus, my light and my song; my hope for time, my expectation for eternity." Altogether lovely thou art. My soul is ravished with the vision. Thou art mine. Come, let me clasp thee. Come life, come death, come scorn and pain, come whirlwind and darkness. Lord Jesus, I cannot give thee up. I have heard thy voice. I have seen thy bleeding side. Lord Jesus, if I had some garden plucked from heavenly gardens I would wreath it for thy brow. If I had some gem worthy of the place I would set it in thy crown. If I had some harp I would strike it in thy praise. But I come lost and ruined and undone to throw myself at thy feet.

No grief I bring,
Simply to the cross I cling.
Thou knowest all things. Then knowest that I love thee.

But I remark again, "It behooved Christ to suffer," that the world might learn how to suffer. Sometimes people suffer because they cannot help themselves, but Christ had in his hands all the weapons to punish his enemies, and yet in quiescence he endured all out rage. He might have hurled the rocks of Golgotha upon his persecutors; he might have chafed the earth until he swallowed up his assailants; he might have called in re-enforcement or taken any thunderbolt from the armory of God Omnipotent and hurled it seething and fiery among his foes, but he answered not again.

Oh, my hearer! has there ever been in the history of the world such an example of enduring patience as we find in the cross? Some of you suffer physical distress, some of you have lifelong ailments, and they make you fretful. Sometimes you think that God has given you a cup too deep and too brimming. Sometimes you see the world laughing and romping on the highways of life, and you look out of the window while seated in invalid's chair.

PATIENT SUFFERING OF CHRISTIAN LOVE.
I want to show you this morning one who had worse pains in the head than you have ever had, whose back was scourged, who was wounded in the hands and wounded in the feet, and suffered all over; and I want that example to make you more enduring in your suffering, and to make you say, "Father, not my will, but thine be done." You never have had any bodily pain, and you will never have any bodily pain that equaled Christ's torture. "It behooved Christ to suffer," that he might show you how physically to suffer.

Some of you are persecuted. There are those who hate you. They criticize you. They would be glad to see you stumble and fall. They have done unaccountable meanness toward you. Sometimes you feel angry. You feel as if you would like to retort. Stop! Look at the closed lips, look at the still hand, look at the beautiful demeanor of your Lord. Struck, not striking back again. Oh, if you could only appreciate what he endured in the way of persecution you never would complain of persecution. The words of Christ would be your words. "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; but if not, thy will be done." "It behooved Christ to suffer" persecution, that he might show you how to endure persecution.

Some of you are bereft. It is no random remark, because there is hardly a family here that has not passed under the shadow. You have been bereft. Your house is a different place from what it used to be. The same furniture, the same books, the same pictures, but there has been a voice hushed there. The face that used to light up the whole dwelling has vanished. The patter of the other feet does not break up the loneliness. The wave has gone over your soul, and you have sometimes thought what you would tell him when he comes back; but then the thought has flashed upon you, he will never come back.

Ah! my brother, my sister, Christ has sounded all that depth. Jesus of the bereft soul is here today. Behold him! He knows what it is to weep at the tomb. It seems to me as if all the storms of the world's sorrow were compressed into one sob, and that sob were uttered in two words, "Jesus wept." I close my sermon with a doxology: "Blessing and glory and honor and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever, Amen and amen!"

Indian Voters in Oklahoma.

The fact that the Indian can vote if he lives "in severalty" and pays taxes like any other citizen comes up at odd times to bother new states and territories. In 1889 it raised a great row in Minnesota. The legislature having enacted that Indians, whether on a reservation or not, who had taken certain steps in civilization, such as dressing like white men and wearing their hair ditto, should have the right to vote, one Cullen, an Indian agent, promptly cut the hair of all those in his charge, put breeches on them and marched them to the polls.

Among the humors of the next campaign was a dialogue like this: "Heh, who cut your hair?" "Cullen & Co." Now Judge John Dills and other lawyers declare that the Indians in Oklahoma will be entitled to vote at the coming elections. They say the law provides that Indians taking land in severalty have the same right of franchise as any citizen, and if this opinion be good law the candidates will have 3,800 Indians to buttonhole. If the Indians vote it is likely to make a great difference in the congressional contest.

A French Funeral Custom.

A funeral custom in vogue at present is for the mourners at the obsequies of some person of limited means to follow the hearse in an omnibus. To be sure it is a very solemn vehicle, all black, with "Omnibus Funeraria" inscribed in large silver letters on either side, so that the careless outsider shall not bounce into the midst of the mourning multitude, but on the whole it seems to belittle the dignity of grief. However, the average Parisian does not specially enjoy funerals unless they are grand official functions, when the crowd that lines the streets has a most unaffectedly good time and is unparagoned of lively and frivolous criticisms on every detail of the affair. —Paris Letter.

Oil Springs Long Since Abandoned.

Before the year 1860 oil springs were known to exist along the valley of Oil creek. The Indians of that section used the oil for medicinal and other purposes. Remains of wells and pits are to be found in that vicinity. Some of these have been cribbed, the timber showing the marks of edged tools, and are sunk to the depth of twenty feet or more. In these pits and wells, which are now nearly all filled up, trees over several hundred years old have been discovered growing. The Indians do not know who dug these wells, and the presumption is that they were dug by a prehistoric race. —Interview in Chicago Tribune.

A would-be wit writes some verses about Mrs. Mary Lease in a New York paper, and the end of each stanza is this: "But where is Mr. Lease?" Well, is it any of your business? Where is your wife?

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